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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

October 12, 2001

Dear Stakeholders,

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is the state entity responsible for planning, constructing and operating a high-speed train system serving California's major metropolitan areas. The Authority is preparing a program-level Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a 700-mile high-speed train system serving Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles, the Inland Empire, Orange County and San Diego. The Authority is the lead state agency for the state EIR, and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the lead federal agency for the federal EIS. The Authority and the FRA have jointly completed a scoping process and have evaluated numerous options for routes and stations.

The Authority and FRA are reviewing staff recommendations for the first screening of alternatives for the Bay Area-Merced, Los Angeles-Bakersfield, Los Angeles-Inland Empire-San Diego, and Los Angeles-Orange County-San Diego regions. After receiving public and agency comments, staff will prepare a final draft for Authority approval at the November 14, 2001 board meeting to be held in Bakersfield. The "Draft First Screening Report" and technical reports for each region are available on the Authority's public website (www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov). Some of the key decisions may include:

1. elimination of Maglev technology;
2. elimination of steel-wheel-on-steel-rail technology that cannot share tracks with other services in urban areas;
3. on the San Francisco Peninsula, only continue investigation of Caltrain Corridor shared-track alternatives;
4. elimination of a direct link to Los Angeles International Airport; and
5. investigating only "non-electric" incremental improvements of the existing "Surfliner" service along the coast between Irvine and San Diego.

In order to provide another opportunity for the public to speak directly to board members prior to the November 14, 2001 meeting, an additional Authority meeting has been scheduled for October 26, 2001 beginning at 10:30 AM at Burbank City Hall, Council Chambers. The meeting is solely for the purpose of receiving public comment – there will be no new information presented and no actions taken by the board (see attached agenda). Written public comment can be mailed to the Authority, faxed or sent electronically via the website or by e-mail (cpourvahidi@hsr.ca.gov).

Staff recommendations for the Sacramento-Bakersfield region will be presented at the November 14, 2001 board meeting as an informational item. The Authority is expected to vote on the Sacramento-Bakersfield recommendations at the January 16, 2002 meeting in San Francisco.

Sincerely,

Mehdi Morshed
Executive Director

